

Samūla 2024: The Heritage Festival



The Ves dance has its roots in the traditions of the Temple of the Tooth and has been an integral part of the annual Dalada Perahera.

The Santani Foundation is delighted to announce the Samūla Festival 2024, a grand celebration of Sri Lankan dance, drumming, and craftsmanship scheduled to take place from August 2nd to 4th in the picturesque city of Kandy. This year's festival promises to be a remarkable event, showcasing Sri Lanka's rich cultural heritage and bringing together artists, performers, and enthusiasts from around the world.

Hosted by the Santani Foundation, the charitable arm of the Santani Resorts group, Samūla will feature the last remaining Gurukulas (traditional schools of the Art) of Kandy, who have preserved and passed down their unique approaches to Kandyan dance through 17 generations. The festival will also highlight artists from various regions of Sri Lanka, showcasing our nation's diverse and vibrant cultural heritage.

The festival is curated by Heshma Wignaraja, the Artistic Director of the Chitrasena Dance Company, with advisors Ravibandu Vidyapathi and Waidyawathie Rajapakse Amunugama of the Amunugama Gurukula.

Santani foundation's initiative aims to promote conscious tourism, foster talent, and provide scholarships through this event. They seek to revive dying traditional art forms and offer economic alternatives for practitioners, educating attendees about the meaning and evolution of these arts while adapting them to modern needs without losing their essence.

Highlighting the incredible heritage of Kandyan dance, passed down through 17 generations, and preserving this vital cultural art form.



The traditional Kandyan drummers have an extraordinary style of drumming.



The costume and the head covering of the Ves dancer is sacred and the rhythmic tinkling created by the ornaments worn by the dancer is accompanied by the sound of drums, adding to the enchanting experience.



The thrilling and vibrant dance movements of Ves Dance include powerful footwork, leaps and whirls.





The full panoply of the Kandyan dance is witnessed each year during the Esala Dalada Perahera.









Kandy's distinctive dancing and drumming spread from the temple into the cultural mainstream, making them an expression of Sri Lankan culture.

Visit:

<https://www.samula.org>

Samūla: A Celebration of the Sri Lankan Traditions of Dance, Rituals and Crafts	
Day 1: August 2, 2024 (Friday)	
First poojas at the Devalayas at the Ground and indoor walk through, 4pm–5pm	Preshow Talk (English): The Kandyan Ritual Dance tradition its purpose, practice and posterity by Dr. Widyawathie Rajapaksha, Dr. Ravibanadhu Vidyapathy and Moderated by Heshma Wignaraja, 5.30pm – 6.30pm, Auditorium
Traditional Dance Ritual: Lighting up the Festival, 6.30pm, Ritual Grounds	Traditional Dance Ritual: Kohomba Kankariya – The healing ritual and the birthplace of the Kandyan Dance, 7pm (Aug 2) – 12 noon (Aug 3), Ritual Grounds
Day 2: August 3, 2024 (Saturday)	
Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (Sinhala), 10am – 11am Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (English), 11am – 12noon	Discussion (English): The Perehara Tradition - the significance of the Esala Perahera that changed the landscape of our dance ritual traditions by Prof. Herath, Anura Sirisena and Moderated by Randhula de Silva, 10am – 12noon, Auditorium
Workshop (English): Lecture/Demonstration on Drums and Chants for Dancing Priests and a class in temple drums by Ravibandhu and 2 drummers, 10am – 12noon, Ring Block	Workshop (Sinhala): Architects of the Gods – Gok Craft and Class by Madanayake, 10am – 12 noon, Garden Block
Preshow Talk (English / Sinhala): Udekki – the dancing drums by Achira Tennakoon, Mahinda Wimalasiri, Moderated by Dr. Ravibandhu, 1.30pm – 2.30pm, Ring Block	Preshow Talk (English/ Sinhala): Pantheru – the Buddhist dance ritual by Dehimaduwe Rupasinghe, Mahinda Wimalasiri, Moderated by Dr. Ravibandhu, 2.30pm – 3.30pm, Ring Block
Workshop (English):- Ritual to Stage the evolution of a dance language and a class in walking like the dance priests by Heshma Wignaraja and Chitrasena Dance Company, 2pm – 3pm, Auditorium	Discussion (Sinhala): Kandy Esala Perahera as a living tradition since 3rd Century BC – Dalada and the Devala rituals; Significance of the old and the new perahera; Recognizing the dying and the adoption of new elements by Prof. Herath, Anura Sirisena and Moderated by Rohana Aluthge, 2pm – 3pm, Garden Block
Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (Sinhala), 2pm – 3pm Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (English), 3pm – 4pm	Traditional Dance Ritual: An excerpt of the Udekki Thowil Ritual, 4pm – 6pm, Ritual Grounds
Guided Walk: Devalayas. Held in the ground and indoor area (English), 5pm – 6pm	Traditional Dance Ritual: An excerpt of the Pantheru Ritual and Rites, 6pm – 8pm, Ritual Grounds
Traditional Dance Ritual: An excerpt of the Hewisi Rituals, 8pm – 10pm, Ritual Grounds	
Day 3: August 4, 2024 (Sunday)	
Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (English), 10am – 11am	Workshop (English): 3 styles of traditional dance, drums and folk singing on the island by Heshma Wignaraja and CDC, Moderated by Mirak, 10am – 11am, Ring Block
Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (Sinhala), 11am – 12 noon	Workshop (English): Becoming Pattini and the Ruhunu traditional dance form by Lasantha Kapumahaththaya, Heshma Wignaraja and Moderated by Mirak, 11am – 12 noon, Ring Block
Discussion (English): Devala Traditions their stories, rituals and the sacred insignia of the Gods by Prof. Herath, Moderated by Sanjana Hattotuwa, 10am – 12noon, Auditorium	Workshop (Sinhala): Bulath Padaya and Dunumalappuwa in 3 ways – Embracing differences in gurukuala systems - 3 dancers, 3 drummers by Dr. Waidyawathie and Moderated by Ravibandhu, 10am – 12 noon, Garden Block
Preshow Talk (English / Sinhala): Temple Music Traditions Hewisi by Dr. Ravibandhu, Dr. Waidyawathie and Moderated by Vishnu Vasu, 1.30pm – 2.30pm, Ring Block	Preshow Talk (English/ Sinhala): Temple Music Traditions Nadaswaram by Thivya Sujen and Moderated by Vishnu Vasu, 2.30pm – 3.30pm, Ring Block
Workshop (English): Transforming Mere Mortals the transformative powers of the sacred 'Ves' costume by Thiththapajjala Gurunnase, Jinadasa Master, Danuka Ariyawansa and Moderated by Gunindu, 2pm – 3.30pm, Auditorium	Career Guidance (Sinhala): The study of an ancient dance artform or other traditional arts, the economics and career opportunities for a traditional performing artist by Thaji Dias, Heshma Wignaraja & Moderated by Randhula De Silva, 2pm – 3.30pm, Garden Block
Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (English), 2pm – 3pm Guided walk: in the ground and indoor area (Sinhala), 3pm – 4pm	Traditional Dance Ritual: Kataragama Tradition of Nadaswaram Music, 4pm – 6pm, Ritual Grounds
Guided Walk: Devalayas. Held in the ground and indoor area (Sinhala), 5pm – 6pm	Traditional Dance Ritual: An excerpt of the Devol Maduwa Ritual Sathpattini Yagay, 6pm – 9.30pm, Ritual Grounds
Venue: Dunhinna School, Teldeniya. Tickets: Rs.15,000 (Day pass – premium seating), Rs.36,000 (Festival pass – premium seating), Rs.7,500 (Walk-in pass – standard) Visit: samula.org	